

*Acacia horrida*. (L.) Willd. (Mimosaceae.) 39355. Seeds of the doorn-boom or thorn-tree of South Africa, presented by Mr. J. Burt-Davy, Agricultural Supply Association. "A glabrous flat-topped tree, usually spreading more than its height. The most widely distributed of all South African trees, extending from Capetown through the Karroo to Damaraland, Orange River Colony, Transvaal, Natal, and Delagoa Bay. Its range is however curiously affected in places, being absent, possibly through frost, in several large flat alluvial localities where single trees have grown to perfection. It ascends to about 4000 feet altitude from the eastern coast and considerably further from the western, but is absent from the higher parts of the Drakenburg, and seldom mixes with Proteaceae, thus indicating that soil as well as climate controls its distribution. Occasionally it forms a fine spreading tree 30-40 feet in height, and with stem 2 feet in diameter, much more frequently it is a small umbrella-shaped tree of 10 to 15 feet in height with a clear bole only to 6 or 8 feet, and the constant regrowth dots or covers the veld with all smaller sizes in suitable localities where it is not kept down. Although usually evergreen, yet in dry cold carroid localities it is often leafless for a considerable part of the year, and in some localities it is continuously leafless for years in succession, and is then enormously spiny and colors the veld white instead of green. In most places its use is principally for fuel, for which purpose there is no better wood; but as this does not, except near the towns, use up all that grows, its increase in remote localities is a difficult matter to check. Fire burns the grass under mature thorn-trees without doing them much damage, and as the seeds germinate most readily after being soaked in boiling water or half roasted, those grass fires aid rather than retard regrowth. Chopping off trees at the ground only induces an abundant coppice growth, but it is found that by chopping them off two feet above ground during summer, the coppice growth is more easily controlled, and the stump often dies. Native locations usually become free of thorn-tree eventually, partly through the unrestricted native demand for fuel, kraalwood, etc., and partly through the browsing of goats, which of all artificial methods is the surest means of keeping the tree down. A small brown scale-insect, however, (*Prosopophora prosopidis*, var. *mimosae*) is found to kill the trees wholesale on the occasions of its visits in the Bedford district. During very dry winters it is not an uncommon practice to fell a few leafy thorn-trees daily as a green bite for stock; during summer the shade of the spreading tree is sought after by cattle and sheep; young plants are always browsed, and when ob-